



Healthworks
the community health charity

Jargon Busting: A to Z of Common Community and Public Health Terms

A photograph of six wooden blocks spelling out the word 'JARGON' in black capital letters. The blocks are arranged in a row on a light-colored wooden surface. A series of red dots are scattered around the blocks, forming a shape that resembles a large 'X' or a stylized 'J' that crosses itself. In the background, a small green plant in a white pot is visible, slightly out of focus.

J A R G O N

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A to Z of common health terms

- **Active Travel** – Using walking or cycling instead of driving to improve physical health and reduce pollution.
- **Antenatal Care** – Healthcare and support for pregnant women before birth, including check-ups, scans, and advice.
- **Cancer Screening** – Regular tests to detect cancer early, before symptoms appear, improving the chances of successful treatment. Examples include mammograms for breast cancer and "smear test" for cervical cancer.
- **Care Pathway** – The co-ordinated process of care a patient follows, from initial diagnosis to treatment and ongoing support, ensuring all health needs are met.
- **Chronic Disease Management** – Ongoing care for long-term conditions like diabetes, asthma, or heart disease to help people manage their health.
- **Co-morbidities** – When a person has two or more health conditions at the same time, like diabetes and high blood pressure. This can make treatment more complicated.
- **Collaboration** – Working together with others to share resources, ideas, and expertise to improve health services or address a health issue. Collaboration helps build stronger support networks and more effective solutions.
- **Community Health Charity** – A non-profit organisation that works to improve health and well-being in local communities, often through programmes, education, and support services.
- **Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA)** – A process where healthcare providers study the biggest health challenges in a community to improve services.
- **Commissioned Services** – Health and care services that are planned and paid for by public authorities (like local councils or the NHS). These services are often chosen or "commissioned" to meet the specific needs of a community.

A to Z of common health terms

- **Cost-Effective Solutions** – Strategies or programmes that provide good value for money while improving health outcomes. These solutions aim to make the best use of available resources to tackle health issues effectively.
- **Determinants of Mental Health** – Factors that influence mental well-being, such as relationships, job security, and social support.
- **Determinants of Physical Health** – Factors that affect physical well-being, including diet, exercise, access to healthcare, and the environment. Poor conditions or unhealthy habits can lead to long-term health problems.
- **Early Intervention** – Identifying and addressing health problems as soon as possible to prevent them from getting worse. For example, early support for mental health issues can prevent more serious conditions later.
- **Environmental Health** – How things like pollution, climate change, and clean water impact health.
- **Food Insecurity** – When people struggle to afford or access enough nutritious food, leading to poor health and malnutrition.
- **Health Coaching** – Personal support to help people make healthy lifestyle changes, such as quitting smoking or managing weight.
- **Health Conditions** – Illnesses or diseases that affect an individual's health, such as diabetes, hypertension, asthma, or mental health conditions.
- **Health Disparities** – Differences in health outcomes between groups, often due to social or economic factors.
- **Health Equity** – Ensuring everyone has a fair chance to be as healthy as possible by removing barriers like poverty and discrimination.
- **Health Impact** – How different factors - such as lifestyle, environment, or government policies - affect people's health.
- **Health Improvement** – Helping people make healthier choices and improve their overall well-being.
- **Health Literacy** – The ability to understand and use health information to make good decisions about one's health.
- **Health Promotion** – Programmes and campaigns that encourage healthy behaviours, like healthy eating and exercise.

A to Z of common health terms

- **Health Surveillance** – Tracking health trends and disease outbreaks to prevent further illness.
- **Health Training** – Teaching people about health topics so they can care for themselves and others.
- **Healthy Life Expectancy** – The number of years a person is expected to live in good health, without the limitation of disease or disability.
- **Healthy Lifestyle** – A way of living that promotes overall health, including balanced nutrition, regular exercise, good sleep, and stress management.
- **Inhibited Quality of Life** – When health conditions, such as chronic illness, disability, or mental health issues, limit a person's ability to enjoy life fully or participate in daily activities.
- **Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD)** – A way to measure how deprived (disadvantaged) an area is by looking at things like income, education, crime, and access to healthcare. Areas with higher deprivation tend to have poorer health outcomes.
- **Infant Mortality Rate** – The number of babies who die before their first birthday per 1,000 live births, used as a measure of healthcare quality.
- **Integrated Care** – When different services (like doctors, hospitals, and social workers) work together to provide better patient care.
- **Interventions** – Actions or programmes designed to improve health outcomes, such as smoking cessation programmes, mental health support services, or vaccination campaigns.
- **Life Expectancy** – The average number of years a person is expected to live, based on current mortality rates. This figure can vary by factors such as gender, location, and lifestyle.
- **Life Outcomes** – The long-term impact of health, education, and socio-economic factors on a person's quality of life. People facing challenges like poverty or poor housing may experience poorer life outcomes in areas like health, education, and employment.

A to Z of common health terms

- **Long-Term Health Conditions** – Ongoing health issues, such as diabetes, arthritis, or heart disease, that require long-term management and care. These conditions can significantly impact a person's day-to-day life and may require ongoing treatment, medication, and lifestyle changes.
- **Maternal Health** – The health of a woman during pregnancy, childbirth, and the postnatal period.
- **Mental Wellbeing** – A state of good mental health where individuals can cope with stress and enjoy life.
- **Postnatal Care** – Support for mothers and babies after birth, including recovery advice, mental health support, and support with breastfeeding.
- **Preventative Services** – Services designed to prevent disease or injury, such as regular health screenings, immunisations, and lifestyle interventions.
- **Primary Care** – The first place people go for healthcare, such as GPs (family doctors), dentists, and pharmacists.
- **Primary Care Networks (PCNs)** – Groups of general practices (GPs) working together in a local area to provide more coordinated care. This helps make healthcare more accessible and efficient.
- **Population Health** – Looking at the health of entire communities to help prevent illness and improve overall well-being.
- **Preventative Healthcare** – Healthcare focused on stopping illnesses before they happen, such as vaccinations, cancer screenings, and health check-ups.
- **Public Health** – The science and art of preventing disease, prolonging life, and promoting health through the organised efforts of society, such as health policies and population-wide health interventions.
- **Resilience** – The ability of individuals or communities to recover from health challenges, such as pandemics or disasters.
- **Self-Care** – Steps people take to manage their own health, such as eating well, exercising, and taking medications properly.

A to Z of common health terms

- **Smoking Cessation** – Support and programmes to help people quit smoking, such as counselling, nicotine replacement therapy, and medication.
- **Social Determinants of Health** – Our health is influenced by where we live, how much money we have, our education, jobs, and access to things like clean air, healthy food, and safe housing.
- **Social Isolation** – Feeling lonely or disconnected, which can harm both mental and physical health.
- **Social Prescribing** – Non-medical activities, like exercise classes or support groups, to help people improve their mental and physical well-being.
- **Sustainable Health Impact** – Long-lasting, positive effects on health that continue to benefit individuals and communities over time, such as changes in behavior or access to services that prevent illness.
- **Targeted Services** – Services aimed at specific groups of people who may need extra help due to factors like age, income, or health conditions. For example, support programmes for elderly people or those with long-term health conditions.
- **Tertiary Care** – Highly specialised medical care, like cancer treatment or organ transplants.
- **Universal Healthcare** – A system where everyone has access to healthcare, regardless of their background or income.
- **Universal Services** – Services that are available to everyone in a community, regardless of their background or income. Examples include vaccinations, public health information, and basic healthcare services. These services aim to improve overall health for all.
- **Vaccination Coverage** – The percentage of people in a community who have received a specific vaccine, helping prevent disease outbreaks.
- **Wellness** – A holistic approach to health that focuses on achieving balance in physical, mental, and social well-being.
- **Wellbeing Hubs** – Community based centres offering health advice, mental health support, and exercise programmes.



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Helping people of all ages across the
North East live longer, healthier and
happier lives since 1995

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